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ADDRESS

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COL. A. E. JONES

AT

Turpin's Grove, Anderson Township,

ON

REMINISCENCES

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OF THE

Early Days of the Little Miami Valley.

JULY 4. 1878.

CINCINNATI, OHIO:

TIMES BOOK AND JOB PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

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FIRST BLOCK HOUSE AT COLUMBIA,

ERECTED 1788.

ADDRESS OF COLONEL A. E. JONES,

AT

TURPIN'S GROVE, ANDERSON TOWNSHIP,

JULY 4th, 1878,

ON

"Reminiscences of the Early Days of the Little Miami Valley."

Within the last year, by invitation, I had the honor of addressing the citizens of this vicinity on a subject of great interest, not only to the people of this country, but to the inhabitants of every civilized nation; for upon the successful pursuit of agriculture, as we endeavored to show on that occasion, depends in a great measure the wealth, the power, and permanent prosperity of every civilized people. It is the fountain head from which flows all those elements that combine to make nations great, and by which all other branches of industry that contribute to the happiness of mankind, are sustained.

These highly cultivated farms in this beautiful valley are unmistakable evidences of the fact that you do not underestimate the importance of this great industry, and the comforts that surround the farmers prove that their labors have not been in vain.

The subject upon which I have been requested to address you to-day, "The Reminiscences of the Early Days of the Little Miami Valley," may not be of so much interest to the general public, but locally, the history of this valley must ever be interesting, because of the circumstances under which it was settled, and because of the trials, hardships and perils

the pioneers passed through in transforming a wilderness into the highly cultivated country of the present day.

It can not be expected, however, in the brief time allowed on such an occasion as this, that more than a glance can be taken of the more important events of its exploration and early settlement; nor might it at first view seem to be a fitting subject on this "National Day;" but, if I have read the history of the West correctly, the circumstances attending the first settlement of this valley, as well as of all the territory between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers, have a close historical connection with the deeds and lives of the heroic men who made this day the most glorious in the annals of our country.

When or what white men first beheld this magnificent scenery before us, or trod upon this soil, we may never certainly know. They may have been French voyageurs, or captives of the red men, who, far away from friends and home, were tortured to death, and had no opportunity to tell what they had seen; or perhaps the fearless traders from Pennsylvania or Virginia may have seen it in their annual visits to the savages for the purpose of traffic.

Be this as it may, the colonists of Virginia and Pennsylvania at a very early date had learned by some means or other, either from traders or the natives, that the Ohio country, as it was called, was a land of great fertility and of surpassing natural advantages, creating a great desire to form colonies or settlements west of the Alleghany mountains. There was, however, no organized effort to this end until 1748 and 1749, when a land company was formed by Thomas Lee, President of the Council of Virginia, Lawrence and Augustine Washington, elder brothers of George Washington, and John Hanbury, a wealthy merchant of London. They procured a charter from the Government of Great Britain, and under that charter a grant of five hundred thousand acres of land between the Kanawha and Monongahela rivers, with the privilege of locating a part of the grant on the north side of the Ohio river.

The indefinite rumors of the great fertility of the lands

north and bordering on the Ohio induced them, before locating their grant, to employ an agent to explore this territory as far West as the great Falls, (now Louisville).

For this purpose they selected Christopher Gist, a surveyor, and an experienced woodsman and hunter, well acquainted with the Indian character, who resided at the time, on the Yadkin river in Virginia, near the line of North Carolina, and who, three years afterward, became so renowned as the companion of George Washington in his expedition up the Alleghany river to Venango.

Gist left Virginia on the 31st of October, 1750, crossed the Ohio at Big Beaver, below Pittsburg, and struck boldly out through the wilderness, exploring the country until he reached Muskingum, a town of the Wyandots and Mingos. There he met George Croghan, a veteran trader from Pennsylvania, with whom he traveled north a hundred miles in February, '51, to Piqua, the residence of the Twigtwees, a tribe of the Miamis. Returning to the Shawanee village at mouth of the Scioto, he continued his journey down the shores of the Ohio, examining with great care the quality of the land, the number, size and course of the streams. In his journal he speaks of the two Miamis and of the great fertility of the soil in their valleys, and that he explored the Great Miami in March, 1751, as far north as Loramie creek, 47 miles above the now city of Dayton, where the Piankaskas, another tribe of Miamis, lived.

He was treated with much kindness by the Indians with whom he had thus far come in contact, but they warned him not to proceed to the Falls, as there was at that time a party of warriors hunting in that vicinity—allies of France—who would take his scalp.

He, however, returned to the mouth of the Miami, thence west to within fifteen or twenty miles of the Falls, where he saw unmistakable evidences of the proximity of Indians.

Crossing the Ohio, he went up the Kentucky river as far as Blue Store, spending some six weeks in exploring the lands on either side of that river; thence home across the

now State of Kentucky, to Virginia, where he arrived in May, 1751.

This is the first authentic account we have of the exploration of this region by any white man. Christopher Gist, therefore, so far as we now know, was the first white man who ever gazed upon these lovely hills and dales.

On his return he gave a glowing account of the country along the Ohio, of the great fertility of the soil, of its numerous crystal streams, the magnificence of its forests, of the grandeur and surpassing beauty of the scenery, mildness of the climate, abundance of game of every description in its forests and on its plains, and of the fine quality of the fish that swarmed in its waters; closing his report by saying that "cultivation was all that was necessary to make it a delightful country."

The Ohio Company, of which Lawrence Washington had now become the manager, by reason of the death of Mr. Lee, immediately took the most active measures to establish colonies and settlements in the great northwest; yet for more than thirty-seven years after Gist's exploration, not a solitary white settlement was successfully established within the present limits of the State of Ohio, for reasons to which we will briefly allude.

Lawrence Washington desired to establish these settlement with Germans from Pennsylvania, but here a difficulty arose which he was not then able to overcome.

The greater part of the Northwest Territory was then claimed by Virginia, and the established church of that colony was the Church of England, and settlers on any part of Virginia Territory would be required to pay parish rates for the support of the clergy. These Germans were dissenters and were not willing to pay such rates. Washington sought to have them exempt from this burden, but without success. "It has ever been my opinion," said he, "and I hope it ever will be, that restraints on conscience are cruel in regard to those on whom they are imposed, and injurious to the country imposing them."

The company proceeded, however, with active preparation

for their grand colonizing scheme, and it is possible that the difficulties of parish rates may at length have been overcome, but greater and more insurmountable obstacles were destined to keep back the tide of emigration from this chosen land. The crystal streams of the slopes of the Alleghany, and of the plains of Ohio were yet to be dyed with the blood of pioneers and traders, ere settlements could be accomplished.

The French, who then held Canada and the territory west of the Wabash to the Mississippi, watched with jealous eyes every movement of the English colonists, and sought by every means possible to arouse the suspicion and enmity of the savages against them. They claimed that all the territory watered by the Mississippi and its branches as far as the Alleghanies, belonged to the Crown of France by right of discovery made by Padre Marquette in 1680, when he crossed from Canada and descended the Mississippi as far south as the Arkansas River.

On the other hand England claimed that all the lands between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans belonged to England by virtue of the discovery of John Cabot, years before the discovery of Marquette—and furthermore that the six nations who held the northwest territory as far west as the Mississippi, by conquest—had sold it to England by a treaty made at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1744. Each of these nations knowing now the value of the territory in dispute, began preparations to maintain their claims and to use every means possible to gain the natives to their respective interests.

The Indians did not object to trading with their white brothers, but they objected to them clearing their lands, destroying their hunting grounds and driving off the game.

The French understood this, and did not attempt to make settlements on their hunting lands, but simply traded with them.

The English on the other hand, sought every opportunity to secure treaties and titles from them, and to establish settlements. It was not long, therefore, before the French, more

cunning and politic, had nearly all of the Western tribes in their interest, and suspicious of English encroachments.

Such was the determination of both England and France to acquire permanent possession of the northwest territory, that a resort to arms was inevitable.

The forks of the Ohio (Pittsburg,) was the important point to secure, as the key to the West, and in 1754 a force of men was sent in advance of the troops organizing in Virginia, to erect fortifications at that point; but before the army under Fry and Washington could be made ready and cross the mountains, the French, in an overwhelming force, came down the Alleghany and took possession of the uncompleted works.

Washington, in that expedition, was compelled to retreat from the Monongahela, and surrender to the combined forces of French and Indians, at Fort Necessity, near the Great Meadows, and not far from Uniontown, Pennsylvania. The next year, 1755, another army, composed of regulars of the British army and volunteers, under command of General Edward Braddock, was organized, and made another expedition against the French and Indians, at Fort Duquesne. On the 9th of July, 1755, Braddock crossed the Monongahela, near the mouth of the Youghiogeny, with his splendidly equipped army, confident, in a few hours, of marching a conqueror over the ramparts of Fort Duquesne. Never was an army in better condition or higher spirits than on that fatal 9th of July, as it gayly marched down the Monongahela with drums beating and flags flying. The morning was calm, clear and bright; nature was clothed in her richest summer dress; the hills and valleys on either side of the river, covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, interspersed here and there with flowers of every hue. The feathered choristers poured forth from every tree their matin songs in sweetest notes of praise to "Him who letteth not a sparrow fall without His knowledge."

The placid waters of the beautiful river flowed gently on their right, the bright scarlet uniforms contrasting pleasantly with the rich verdure of nature, and their well polished

muskets glistened in the sunlight. The shrill notes of the fife and the rattle of the drum echoed from hill to hill, and confidence beamed from the countenances of the troops, as merrily they marched along beneath the banner of "Old England." They knew their General was an accomplished and brave soldier, who had won many a victory on the battle-fields of Europe.

Alas! They knew not the wily foe they would in a few hours meet in deadly conflict. Braddock recrossed the river, was ambuscaded, half his army slain; and utterly defeated, was compelled to make an ignominious retreat, himself mortally wounded. Again were the hopes of the pioneers crushed.

In 1758 another expedition, under Boquet and Washington, was more successful, and Fort Duquesne was captured. Then, again, were the eyes of the colonists turned to the West, but the savages had become so hostile that not a settlement on the northwest side of the Ohio was made, and so matters remained until the Revolutionary war. England had never been able to gain a permanent foothold in the territory northwest of the Ohio. Thousands of pioneers with their families were butchered or tortured to death by the savages, hundreds of soldiers had fallen, but to no purpose. They held Fort Duquesne, then called Fort Pitt, but no further could they go. There seemed to be a higher power than man, which said to England, "So far shall thou go, but no farther."

It appeared hard to the sturdy pioneers that a land that literally flowed with milk and honey should be left to a savage race who knew not its value for cultivation.

Notwithstanding all the sufferings and death endured by the pioneers, the hand of Providence could at last be seen in all this when the colonists struck for independence, and the English had been prevented from forming settlements west of the Alleghanies?

Had permanent settlements succeeded in the great Northwest, composed of emigrants loyal to the Crown, Canada on the north and the English army and navy on the seacoasts, where would have been the hope of the colonists in their struggle for independence? Success would have been

impossible, and this fair land in all probability would have been now subject to Great Britain or still inhabited by the red man.

Hard, hard indeed, was the lot of the adventurous pioneers; but the most skeptical could but acknowledge that He who controls the destinies of men and nations saw farther than man, and had determined that in His own good time and way this should become, as it has, an empire of absolute freedom, where the clanking chains of slavery should never be heard, and where beneath the banner of civil and religious liberty, every man might worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

When the Revolutionary war broke out, the English changed their tactics with the Indians, and incited them to hostility against the Americans, furnishing them with arms and ammunition to murder those who might return to settle north of the Ohio; and during that long struggle no settlements were formed within the limits of our State.

When the war was over, and the whole of the Northwest had been ceded to the Confederate States of America by the treaty of Paris, in 1783, men again began to cast their eyes to this land of promise; disappointment for a time, however, as before, was to be their doom.

The Indians appeared more hostile than ever, and disregarded every treaty they had made: instigated, as had been shrewdly suspected, by English emissaries, who had still some hope that a Republic would prove to be a failure, and that they would once more possess our fair heritage. Thus affairs continued until 1787, when the Indian titles had been extinguished by the treaties of Fort Stanwix, Fort McKintosh, and Muskingum, and the ordinance of 1787 had been adopted by the Congress of the Confederate States.

Virginia had on the 1st of March, 1784, magnanimously ceded her right and title to the Northwest, insisting upon this condition only, that contracts made with her Continental soldiers should be held inviolate, and reserved for their benefit all the lands on the Ohio, between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers. Hence, I said, the deeds and the lives of the

men who made this the most glorious day in the annals of our country, had a close historical connection with this valley.

In 1786, a company was organized, called also the Ohio Company, in Boston, by Generals Putnam and Parsons, and the Rev. Dr. Cutler, composed principally of revolutionary soldiers, to purchase territory on the Ohio river. They selected the mouth of the Muskingum, where they landed on the 7th of April, 1788, and made the first permanent settlement within the limits of Ohio.

The fertility of the Miami country had been well known ever since the exploration of Christopher Gist, and many were the pioneers who longed to settle therein, but were prevented by the causes already mentioned. Now, as these difficulties had apparently disappeared, explorers were again seeking it.

Among those who had examined it in 1786 was Captain Benjamin Stites, of Redstone (Brownsville), Pennsylvania. He was so pleased with the land in this region that he determined to make application to Congress for a purchase between the two Miamis; he could not obtain any east of the Little Miami, that having been reserved by Virginia as a military district for her Continental soldiers.

For this purpose he traveled to New York either on foot or horseback, where Congress was then in session. There he made the acquaintance of John Cleve Symmes, a member of Congress from New Jersey, whom he requested to assist him in making his purchase. After Judge Symmes had heard Captain Stites' glowing description of the Miami country, he concluded the purchase had better not be made until he (Symmes) had seen it.

In 1787 he visited the West and examined the territory between the two Miamis, and found, like the Queen of Sheba, that "Lo! the half had not been told him," and immediately went back and made application in his own name to purchase two million acres between the two Miamis, and received a contract for one million acres, which, after being surveyed, was found to contain less than 600,000. Of this tract he sold Captain Stites 20,000 acres, as shown by the following curious contract copied from the Records of Hamilton county.

“Whereas, Congress, by the resolutions of the 22d day of October, 1787, directed the Commission of the Treasury Board to contract with John C. Symmes for all the lands lying between the two Miami rivers to a certain line which forms the north bend thereof, these may certify that if Captain Benjamin Stites shall raise certificates to pay for twenty thousand acres of the same or any larger quantity, he shall have it at the price agreed with the Treasury Board, which is five shillings per acre, making payment therefor, and in all things conforming to the conditions of the contract with the Treasury Board, and also with the articles or conditions of the sale and settlement of the land which will be published by John C. Symmes. On Captain Stites purchasing twenty thousand acres, or any larger quantity, he shall have the privilege of appointing one surveyor to assist in running out the country, so far as the proportion he purchases shall be to the whole tract.

“This surveyor shall be entitled to receive the same fees for his services as the other surveyors employed in that survey shall receive. As soon as credit or time of payment can be given, agreeable to the contract, Captain Stites shall have the benefit thereof as all other purchasers shall have, but this is not till after the two first payments.

[Signed]

“JOHN CLEVES SYMMES.

“NEW YORK, 9th of November, 1787.”

This was followed by another contract, made at Brunswick, New Jersey, on December 7th, 1787.

“Captain Benjamin Stites enters ten thousand acres and the fraction on the Ohio and Little Miami rivers, and is to take in Mr. John Carpenter as one of his company, to be on line or sections on the Ohio and Little Miami; from the point, and ten thousand acres on equal lines and sections at the mill stream falling into the Ohio between the Little and Great Miamis—which, when the certificates therefor are paid and the

Record Book open, shall be recorded to him and to such of his company as join therefor.

[Signed]

“JOHN C. SYMMES.

“NEW BRUNSWICK, 7th of December, 1787.”

Then there seems to have been a supplement, without date or signature:

“The last ten (10,000) thousand acres is to be taken in the following manner: Two sections at the mouth of Millcreek, and the residue to begin four (4) miles from the Ohio up Millcreek. Captain Stites takes four (4) sections on the Little Miami with the fraction adjoining the ten (10,000) thousand acres where it comes to the Little Miami, and four sections with the section next above the range of township taken by Daniel ——, Esq., on the Little Miami.”

On the 8th of February, 1793, Capt. Stites paid in full for his land, as will appear from the following receipt:

CINCINNATI, February the 8th, 1793.

Received of Benjamin Stites, Esq., at different payments, certificates of debts due by the United States, to the amount of ten thousand six hundred and fifty-two dollars and twenty-three one-hundredths of a dollar, in payment for different parts of the Miami purchase, lying, as may appear by location of Mr. Stites, ten thousand acres round Columbia, seven sections on the waters of Millcreek for different people, as will appear by the Miami records; and about three or four sections in the neighborhood of Covalt's station, and in cash orders and other articles, to the amount of one hundred and fifty-eight pounds, eight shillings and eight pence, for which lands, accommodated to the several locations, I promise to make a deed in fee simple, so soon as I am enabled by receiving my deed from the United States.

Attest:

Signed,

JOHN S. GANO.

JOHN C. SYMMES.

In the summer of 1788, Captain Stites and his party launched their broad-horn boat on the waters of the Monongahela, and started on their journey to their future homes at the mouth of the Little Miami, and arrived in July, at Limestone, now Maysville, Kentucky.

There he made clapboards for roofs of their cabins, and drew up an article of agreement (which we have not been able to find), signed by thirty persons, agreeing to form a settlement at the mouth of the Little Miami; some of them, however, backed out, on account of reports circulated, as was said, by Kentuckians, interested in settlements in that Territory, to the effect that a large party of hostile Indians were encamped at the Miami. They started from Limestone on the 16th day of November, 1788, and landed below the mouth of the Miami, on the 18th; after taking some precautions to prevent surprise by the Indians, they proceeded to erect a block-house, in front of the residence of Athen Stites, Esq., which is probably the spot where they landed. They began work on the block-house on the 19th of November, a part of the men standing guard while the others worked. On the 24th of November the women and children and their goods were removed into it.

In the first Directory of the city of Cincinnati, published in October, 1819, the names of the "First Settlers of Columbia" are given as—"Major Benjamin Stites, James H. Bailey, Hezekiah Stites, Daniel Shoemaker, Elijah Stites, Owen Owens, Jno. S. Gano, three women, a number of small children and several other persons whose names are forgotten." In a work published by Robert Clarke, Esq., of Cincinnati in 1872, and kindly furnished me by that gentleman a short time since, the following names appear as the names of

"THE EARLY SETTLERS OF COLUMBIA."

James H. Bailey, Zephu Ball, Jonas Ball, James Bowman, Edward Buxton, W. Coleman, Benjamin Davis, David Davis, Owen Davis, Samuel Davis, Francis Dunlavy, Hugh Dunn, Isaac Ferris, John Ferris, James Flinn, Gabriel Foster, Luke

Foster, John S. Gano, Newell, John Phillips, Jonathan Pitman, Benjamin F. Randolph, James Seward, William Goforth, Daniel Griffin, Joseph Grove, John Hardin, Cornelius Hurley, David Jennings, Henry Jennings, Levi Jennings, Ezekiel Larned, John McCullough, John Manning, James Mathews, Aaron Mercer, Elijah Mills, Ichabod Miller, Patrick Moore, William Moore, John Morris, Benjamin Stites, Thomas C. Wade, John Web, Wickerham.

Some of these, no doubt, made up the number of those who came down with Captain Stites. They found no Indians on their arrival. There was, however, an encampment of Indians some six miles back from the Ohio river, who soon discovered the boats of Captain Stites. They had with them a white man called "George," who had been taken prisoner twelve years before, when a boy. They sent "George" near the block-house, to have a talk with their white brothers. He called in English to some men at work, but they, supposing him to be one of their own party, gave him a rough answer, when he and the Indians with him fled to their encampment. In a few days afterward, several engineers went out hunting, and when some distance from the block-house, a party of Indians on horseback discovered their trail, and soon came up with them. The engineers thought they were hostile, and prepared for defense. John Hamson and Mr. Cox leveled their guns at them, when one of the Indians trailed his gun, took off his cap and extended his hand in a friendly manner, "George" telling Hamson not to shoot, they were friendly, and wanted to be taken to the block-house. Becoming satisfied that they had no hostile intentions, they took them to the block-house, and the whites and Indians soon became very friendly, the hunters lodging frequently in their camps when out hunting, and the Indians spending days and nights in the block-house and cabins of the settlers with their squaws and papposes, regaling themselves on "old Monongahela whisky."

Soon after Captain Stites had commenced his settlements, ten or twelve soldiers of the regular army came down from Limestone, and erected another block-house below that built

by the settlers, said to have been near or between the toll-gate on the California Pike and the river.

Captain Stites sent messengers to John Cleves Symmes, then at Limestone, informing him that the reports of the hostility of the Indians were false; Judge Symmes then determined to begin his settlements, at the mouth of the Great Miami, and sent a party forward early in January, 1789, with stock and provisions. They landed at Columbia, where their boats were crushed by the ice, and nearly all of their stock and provisions were lost. The river rose, during that month, to an unusual height, and covered the Miami bottoms, leaving but one cabin above the water. The soldiers had to climb to the top of the block-house, and escape to the high ground in a boat, which they had fortunately preserved from being crushed by the ice.

Judge Symmes left Limestone on the 29th of January, 1789, with his family, for the mouth of the Great Miami; but on his arrival at Losantiville, as Cincinnati was then called, he learned that the site for his great city was many feet under water. He then began the settlement of North Bend early in February. The two chosen spots for great cities at the mouths of the two Miamis being both under water, gave Losantiville a great advantage, and was the cause, no doubt, of it being finally chosen as the best location for a large city. It is said, however, another cause had a greater influence in its favor.

Judge Symmes had prevailed upon the Government to send him troops to protect his settlement at North Bend, where a fort was to be built by the officer commanding. There was a beautiful woman, the wife of one of the pioneers, to whom the officer in command (Ensign Luce), it seems, became very attentive, so much so that the husband thought it but right to leave North Bend and move up to Losantiville. The officer began at once to doubt the propriety of erecting a fort at North Bend. Symmes insisted that it should be built there. The officer finally agreed that he would not positively decide until he had carefully examined the matter, and went up to Losantiville prospecting, and immediately began the erection of a block-house. The troops were taken

there, and the settlers deeming it safer to be where they could be protected from Indians, who had already murdered several, began to move toward the neighborhood of the block-house, at Losantiville.

THE PIONEERS OF THE LITTLE MIAMI VALLEY

Met with their first misfortune in the flood of January, 1789, losing much of their property, which could not be replaced.

All of their cabins were under water but one. They had commenced their settlement in the fall, and had to wait until the next year before a crop could be raised, and were compelled to depend on the meagre supplies to be obtained from an occasional boat from the Monongahela or Upper Ohio, or what could be brought from the neighborhood of Lexington on pack-horses; in either case, that little was obtained at enormous prices, and most of them having spent their means in paying for their lands and moving their families, were too poor to buy at any price. The most favorably situated had great difficulty in providing for their families. There was plenty of wild game, but no corn or salt, and other necessities of life.

In the spring and summer of 1789, the women and children dug up roots, while the men worked, for the subsistence of their families, frequently going up as far as Turkey Bottom to procure the root of the bear-grass, which, being dried, was pounded as fine as possible and used as a substitute for bread; and this often at the peril of their lives, or of being captured by Indians, who very soon became troublesome.

To add to the distress of the organized communities of settlers, many adventurers had come out voluntarily, with the expectation of receiving land gratuitously, which they could immediately begin to cultivate for the subsistence of their families; but they found to go into the wilderness any distance from the block-houses or stations, was exposing themselves and families to almost certain destruction.

To remain in the settlements, starvation stared them in the face. Their only hope was for a number to join and erect strong block-houses, in which their families and goods could

be protected. This plan was adopted, and several stations were established in the neighborhood of Columbia, Cincinnati and North Bend. Garrard station, where Major Stites and Capt. Flinn had a severe battle with the Indians, was just below here, on the Colonel Taylor farm, now cultivated by my good friend Mart. Hess. Covalt's was above on Round Bottom, Dunlap's at Colerain, White's at Carthage, Ludlow at the place near St. Bernard, now known as Ludlow station, on the Marietta Railroad. There was also one at Montgomery, and a block-house on Walnut Hills, built by the Reverend James Kemper. From these block-houses the men would sally forth in the morning; some would work at clearing the land, while others would stand guard or scout in the neighborhood to prevent surprise by the Indians. At night all would retire within, taking their property, tools and implements with them. Notwithstanding all these precautions many were killed and captured, almost beneath the walls of the block-houses.

The Indians, through bad treatment of renegade traders, had become irritated, and they looked upon the whites as one family, and what one did, all were responsible for. They retaliated, first by stealing horses; and, in 1789, a party of Shawnees, on their return from a visit to Judge Symmes', stole some horses from Columbia. The pioneers soon followed on their trail, and Captain Flinn went in advance as a scout, but was captured and taken to the Indian camp. Suspecting from their movements going on about him that personal violence was intended, he suddenly sprang from their midst and made his escape to his friends. They captured some of the Indian horses, and returned to Columbia safely. In a few days the Indians came to Columbia, and brought Captain Flinn's gun, and begged Captain Stites to let them have their horses, declaring that they were not the horse thieves. After some further parleying, he gave them the horses, and all was amicably settled.

But their troubles were not to end with the loss of horses or other articles stolen.

Soon after the settlement at Columbia, Turkey Bottom,

in sight of where we now meet, was leased by Captain Stites to several of the settlers. It had been an Indian clearing and planted in corn, as had been the bottom at the mouth of the river, for a great number of years before the whites arrived, and, as I understand, has been annually cultivated in corn ever since, now ninety years, and still produces extraordinary crops.

It is related that in 1790 Judge Wm. Goforth raised from a field which had been cultivated by the Indians, 963 bushels of corn from nine acres, and Captain Benjamin Davis 114 bushels from one acre.

Among the lessees of Turkey Bottom was James Seward, who occupied one of the lots into which the bottom was divided. His dwelling was on the side of the hill at Columbia, and a path of nearly two miles led to the bottom. Near this path Abel Cook had felled a large hickory tree for the nuts.

Two of Seward's sons, Obadiah and John, one about twenty-one, the other fifteen, attended to the cultivation of the field. On the afternoon of the 20th of September, 1789, on their way to their clearing, and just as they leaped over the hickory tree, two Indians sprang on them from the tree-top. The boys were unarmed, no danger being apprehended from the Indians then. Obadiah at once surrendered and was fastened with twigs, but John, with a desperate effort, made for home. The Indian on his side of the tree gained on him, and when within striking distance, hurled his tomahawk at him, cleaving his skull behind the ear, and as soon as he was overtaken, he was again struck in the head, scalped, and left for dead, part of his brains oozing from his wounds; but he was found by his neighbors and lifted on the back of John Clawson, and carried home, where he lived thirty-nine days.

Obadiah was held as a captive for some time, when the Indians became tired of him and some others, they determined to take them to Pittsburg to be ransomed. On their way, Obadiah was driving some horses when he accidentally took the wrong road, at which an Indian, under the influence of liquor, became angry, fired at, and killed him. His head

was cut off, with some of the skin of the breast adhering, and stuck upon a stake, which was driven along the side of the road. A hired man, topping and blading corn for John Phillips, had been captured in the same month the Swards were attacked, and was with the party on the way to Pittsburg when young Seward was killed, and on his return to Columbia gave the first information of him since his capture. Soon after this Mr. Newal and another man were killed at Round Bottom while hewing logs in front of their cabins.

Indians would frequently attack the stations, which were defended heroically by the pioneers. One of these attacks will suffice to show the danger that constantly threatened them, even in the block-houses.

In the Winter of 1790-1, three hundred Indian warriors, led by the notorious renegade, Simon Girty, appeared before Colerain station, at that time occupied by fourteen (14) United States soldiers, under Colonel Kingsbury. On the 5th of January a surveyor named Sloan, with his party, were out surveying, when they were attacked by Indians; one of his men was killed, Abner Hunt was captured, and Sloan himself wounded, but escaped with John Wallace to Colerain. On the Monday following, Girty sent Hunt near the block-house to demand its surrender. This was refused, and the attack was immediately made, but the little garrison nobly resisted the assaults of the foe. A parley was asked for and the surrender again demanded, with the threat that they would take vengeance on the prisoner Hunt if refused. Girty said, "They had five hundred warriors, and all the roads to Fort Washington were guarded."

Kingsbury replied that, "if they were five hundred *devils*, he would not surrender the fort."

They continued the attack until midnight, when they proceeded to carry out their threat on poor Hunt, throwing him upon his back, stripped naked, extending his limbs, fastening them to stakes in the ground, they built fires upon and hacked his body, and tore off his scalp. All night these horrid tortures continued, and the screams of the prisoner could be heard by those in the station.

During all the siege they had not a drop of water, and the only provisions were a few handfuls of parched corn, distributed from time to time, by some girls named Sarah Hahn, her sister Salone, Rebecca Crum, and another named Birket.

On the 7th of July, 1792, Oliver M. Spencer, then a lad of thirteen years of age, in company with Jacob Light, Mr. Clayton and Mrs. Coleman, and a drunken soldier, started from Fort Washington in a canoe, but, as the boat was not large enough for such a load, young Spencer thought he would walk along the shore, and when just above the Jamestown Ferry, in the First Ward, they were attacked by two Indians, concealed in the willows on the bank. Clayton was killed and scalped. Light was wounded and fell into the river, but managed to swim out of the reach of the savages. Mrs. Coleman jumped into the river and floated more than a mile, when she was rescued, her clothes bearing her up in the water. Young Spencer was captured and taken to their towns on the Maumee, and remained a captive eight months, when he was ransomed by his father, at Detroit, for the sum of one hundred and twenty-five dollars.

From the recital of these sufferings, we can scarcely imagine how the pioneer fathers and mothers could bear up under them. Yet they give us but a faint idea of the trials they underwent.

After the first year they could, it is true, raise corn sufficient for their own necessities, but there were no mills to grind it, and it had to be pounded in a wooden mortar, out of which they made corn bread. The first mill was Wickersham's, near the site of the old mill just below the Union Bridge.

Colonel Taylor, of Newport, to whom I am under many obligations for information on the first settlement of this township, informed me yesterday, that his father crossed the Ohio river with a colored servant, taking two bags of corn to that mill in 1792. The mill was constructed by connecting two boats near together and placing a wheel between them. The boats were taken to the falls of the Little Miami, where Turpin's mill since stood, and the wheel was turned by

the current. While this was a great improvement over the "hominy block," yet it did little more than crack the corn.

Turpin's mill was not erected until about the year 1805; the same year the first ferry on the Miami was established at the "old Columbia road," by Samuel and Joseph Holly. The sum paid for the lease was \$100 in cash and 100 gallons of whisky; and it is said that whisky was made at the ferry at that time.

This township, as before stated, was military land on the continental establishment, and the surveys or patents were in the following names: Richard Clough Anderson, father of our highly esteemed fellow-citizen, Larz Anderson, lately deceased; the survey was number 1,677, 454 acres; John Anderson, No. 427, 750 acres; John Brown, No. 706, 200 acres; Theo. Bland, No. 620, 1,333 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres; Robert Blair, Wm. Cassel, John Demsey, Benj. Gray, John Halfpenny, Daniel Sahon, No. 535, 1,000 acres; John Crittenden, No. 410, 1,000 acres; Edward Clark, No. 1,679, 400 acres; Joseph Egglestone, No. 609, 1,000 acres; Jacob Fears, No. 706, James Figgin, No. 706, James McDonald, No. 706, James Payton, No. 706, 1,000 acres; John Green, James Giles, No. 535; Wm. Taylor, No. 637, 1,000 acres; Wm. Moseley, No. 1,115, 1,000 acres; Robert Morrow, No. 618, 2,000 acres; John Nancarrow, No. 3,393, 270 acres; Robert Powells, No. 552, 600 acres; John Parke, No. 1,126, 1,000 acres; A. Singleton, No. 624, 515 acres; Edward Stevens, No. 1,674, 1,000 acres; Frank Taylor, No. 4,243; Nathaniel Wilson, No. 2,204, 400 acres; John English, No. 6,532, 250 acres; John Hains, No. 3,817, 250 acres; Abram Hites, No. 608, 1,000 acres; Hites and Robinson, No. 1,618; P. Higgins, No. 3,394, 90 acres; Geo. C. Lights, No. 8,903; Nathaniel Massie, No. 2,276, 600 acres; William Moore, No. 916, 160 acres; John Mead, No. 1,682, 434 acres; Joseph Neville, No. 1,680, 200 acres; James Pendleton, No. 1,126, 1,000 acres; Holt Richardson, No. 500, 1,000 acres; John Steele, No. 536, 666 $\frac{2}{3}$ acres; James Taylor, No. 1,581, 555 acres, (father of Colonel Taylor, of Newport); Bennet Tompkins, No. 395, 1,666 $\frac{2}{3}$ acres; General Washington, No. 1,775, 997 acres.

This was not entered by General Washington, because his claim entitled him to what was called a State line patent, given to Virginia troops, for services in the French and Indian wars. It was canceled, and the survey in his name was entered by Henry Massie, a revolutionary soldier.

Among the first settlers were Philip Turpin, 1795; Mr. Garrard, Issac Vail, Stephen Davis, Stephen Betts, John Grimes, the Edwards, Corblys, Debolts, Johnsons, Clarks and Durhams.

Although Anderson Township was not much settled until after the Indian troubles, which were brought to an end by General Wayne, in 1794, yet all the first settlers had to suffer great hardships for many years afterward in common with other Western pioneers.

The dwellings of the first settlers of the west were cabins, covered with clapboards, the space between the logs chinked with stone or wood, and daubed with mud; the floors of puncheon, and a ladder in one corner to reach the loft; few were able to procure glass for windows, greased paper being used as a substitute; their furniture of the rudest character; sugar-troughs their cradles. There are persons still living *in this* vicinity who were actually rocked in sugar-troughs.

The clothes which they had brought from the East were replaced by those made of homespun linsey-woolsey or tow-linen, and the skins of wild animals; coon and bear-skins, furnished the men with caps, instead of hats, and moccasins took the place of shoes. Every house had its spinning-wheel, and the big wheel on which was spun the flax, the tow and wool, that were woven into cloths for garments, on the old-fashioned loom, by the mothers and daughters of that day. They spun their own yarn then, but it was different from the yarns we often *hear* spun in these more prosperous times.

Their clothes were of a color exceedingly unpopular in Northern States more recently. Their dye-stuff was the bark of the butternut, and fortunate, indeed, were they who could procure dye-stuffs of different colors, wherewith to stripe their cloths.

They did not forget or neglect their religious duties nor

that other handmaid of civilization and prosperity, the education of their children. When they went to the old church at Columbia—the first built in Hamilton county—every man took his rifle, and guards or sentries remained outside, whose steps were heard as they paced around the house, while those within were listening to services conducted by the Rev. John S. Gano, who preached the first Sermon ever heard in this Miami Valley, at the block-house, soon after it was erected at Columbia. Schools were taught in the block-houses until they could build school-houses, and it was safe for the children to attend them.

The sick were kindly nursed by the neighbors, and when death entered the cabin of a pioneer, every one possible went to the funeral, and the corpse was not borne to the grave on elliptic springs, in a gilded hearse, at a 2:40 gate, but reverently carried to the grave on a bier by the pioneers themselves.

All their deprivations and inconveniences were borne cheerfully, and there was as much and more real happiness in the rude cabins of the first settlers than can be found in the more pretentious and palatial residences of the present time. There was a mutual dependence upon one another which all recognized, and a confidence between neighbors rarely found at the present time. They were ever ready to assist one another, and had their enjoyments, as well as their hardships.

If a neighbor was sick or short-handed, and his crops needed harvesting, every one turned out with his sickle and rake to save it. If a cabin or barn was to be raised, an afternoon was appointed, and all were invited to the frolic. So with corn-huskings and quiltings, and wood-choppings; no one thought of asking pay for such assistance—it was gratuitously and cheerfully given. Plenty of “Old Monongahela” and a good supper was always on hand, and at night the young people gathered in for their share of the fun, the young ladies clad in their homespun and coarse shoes, and the young men in hunting-shirts and coon-skin caps, buck-skin breeches and moccasins; while a darkey perched on a barrel in the corner of the room tuned his violin, and struck up an old “Old

Virginia Reel" that would set all to dancing on the loose puncheon floor, and as the old song says, they

"Danced all night, till broad day light,
And went home with the girls in the morning."

"Ah!" said an old Pioneer a few years since, after giving me a description similar to the above, "that was dancing, sure enough; none of your shams, like they dance now."

As these settlements were composed principally of old revolutionary soldiers, they never forgot to celebrate the Fourth of July, but regularly met, with their families, at some chosen spot, on that day, and heard from some one of their number the Declaration of Independence read, and the story of the seven years' struggle recounted. On such occasions the feast was free—a time of jubilee for all—and, while the young men enjoyed themselves at games, wrestling, shooting at marks, or foot-racing, the old heroes would talk their battles over again, while they sipped their whisky punches; the celebration closing frequently with a frolic or dance at night. At a later date they had "*Independence Balls*," as the following invitation shows:

INDEPENDENCE BALL.

The Honor of Mrs. S—— -

Company is solicited at a Ball, to be held at the Columbian Inn, on Friday Evening next, at seven o'clock, in commemoration of the Birthday of

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| FRANCIS CARR, | } Managers. | { I. C. SCOTT, | |
| P. A. SPRIGMAN, | | | T. C. BAKER, |
| N. LONGWORTH, | | | W. IRWIN, JR. |

June 30, 1812.

Such were the lives of the "Pioneer Fathers" and Mothers of the West. But who so well qualified as these heroes to subdue the wilderness, and make it blossom as the rose?

The war for independence, in which they had participated, had left the country almost bankrupt. The currency was fearfully depreciated. They had spent their fortunes in the service of their country, with nothing left but their lives, stout hearts and willing hands. Business of every kind was

prostrated, commerce had been destroyed, and there were no manufactories. They had no other resource to look to for support than agriculture, and where could they find so favorable prospects as in the great Northwest, with its incomparably fertile soil. The ordinance of '87 had made it forever free. Slavery could never be introduced to compete with honest white labor. It had provided for the education of their children. It established "liberty of conscience." The lands belonged to the General Government, for which they fought, except the reservation of Virginia for their comrades. They needed no capital but the rifle and the ax. With the rifle they could defend themselves and procure food, until the land could be cultivated, and with the ax the mighty forests could be felled and their cabins built. They had faced the hardships and dangers of the seven years' war. They had mingled in the smoke of the contest. They had endured the frosts and storms of winter, with the earth for their couch. Cabins, however rude, would be palaces to them. "They came, they saw, they conquered."

"And where are ye, O fearless men?
And where are ye, to-day?
We call—the hills reply again,
That ye have passed away!"

Yes! they have passed away. The midnight war whoop of the ruthless red man disturbs not their peaceful sleep.

"A sacred band;
They take their sleep together, while the year
Comes with its early flowers to deck their graves,
And gathers them again as Winter frowns."

Their trials, their sufferings, their labors are over, for they "have passed away;" but their deeds and the blessings of their labors live after them. They conquered the savage hordes that roamed over these lovely hills and vales, and skimmed the waters of yonder beautiful river with their light canoes. They possessed the land in peace, and literally "beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks." They transformed a wilderness into a

paradise, and left it to us, my countrymen, a priceless heritage. May the present and future generations ever revere the memory of the pioneer fathers and mothers of the Miami valley.

“But where, Oh! where are they
Who gave to us *this* glorious day.”

A hundred and two years have passed since that patriot band christened the day we celebrate—“The Birthday of American Independence.” Death has long since claimed them as his own.

“The bugle’s wild and war-like blast,
Shall muster them no more;
An army now might thunder past,
And they not heed its roar.

“The starry flag ’neath which they fought
In many a bloody day,
From their old graves shall rouse them not,
For they have passed away.”

Never again shall the martial notes of “Old England” challenge them to the conflict nor the clang of the bugle call them to battle. No more shall the cannon’s deep roar remind them of Trenton, of Monmouth, or Princeton. Nor shall the shrill notes of the ear-piercing fife awake their martial souls to deeds of glory as on the field of Brandywine. No more shall the long roll of the drum awake them from their slumbers to join the serried ranks of their countrymen, as at Germantown, nor ever more shall their blood be chilled by wintry blasts, as it was on the bleak hills of Valley Forge. They have heard their last reveille on earth. Taps to them have been sounded. The lights are out. They sleep their last sleep from which mortal may not wake them. Gray stones and heaped up earth mark them to future times. They have passed away, and in their silent tombs they await that last alarm, when the grave shall give up its dead, and earth shall be no more.

Until then, through all ages of revolving time, may the memories and the deeds of those heroic dead live ever green in the hearts of a grateful people.

History of Cincinnati.

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BY A. E. JONES.

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